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seldom been made, and we cordially recommend it to all seamen as the most complete work on navigation and nautical astronomy yet published. We hope too to see this book adopted in all our nautical schools, and issued to every ship in Her Majesty's service. Why should it not take the place of the bulky tables of Mendoza Rios, at present supplied to all the ships in the fleet, and which; it may be safely affirmed, are not opened once in a voyage on board the greater part of Her Majesty's Vessels?

And now that the examination of geographical positions has been begun in earnest and in the right manner, we may venture to express a hope that geographers in this country will not let the subject fall to the ground, but combine their efforts to produce as accurate a table of positions as our *data* will admit of—materials are far from wanting, and an example has been well set by M. Daussey in his valuable Table of Positions, appended to the *Connaissance des Temps*, and which by his annual *Additions* he endeavours to keep on a level with the latest determinations.

Such a work is not to be lightly entered upon, but the difficulties, though great, are not insurmountable if resolutely grappled with; and we cordially hope that some competent person may be found to undertake the work, assured that no more valuable service could at the present moment be rendered to geography.

VI.—*Reise in Abyssinien*. Von Dr. EDUARD RÜPPELL. 2ter Band. Frankfurt-am-Main. 1840. 8vo. *Travels in Abyssinia*. By Dr. EDWARD RÜPPELL. 2nd vol. 8vo.

THE first volume of this work, published in 1838, having been already announced in the "Geographical Journal" (vol. ix. p. 490), it will be unnecessary to enter into any details as to the plan and object of the author's journey, or to enlarge upon the many talents and acquirements indispensably requisite to form a scientific traveller, which are possessed by him in no ordinary degree. In this as in the former volume, Dr. Rüppell has happily shaken off that extreme dread of making himself the hero of his story, which withheld him in his first publication, from mentioning those personal incidents, those perils and adventures by sea and land, which are sure to befall the traveller "in a strange country," and which, while they excite the reader's interest in his progress, give the clearest insight into the civil and moral condition of the people among whom he sojourns. It is that defect which has rendered his *Travels in Kordofan* one of

the most trustworthy and instructive narratives ever written, so dry and technical, that no bookseller has yet been found willing to venture on publishing an English translation of it, though a version of it was completed by an able and estimable man of science soon after it first appeared in Germany.

To return, however, to the present work : its contents may be arranged under five different heads. 1. A visit to the Abyssinian Alps in the mountains of Simén (Samén). 2. A residence at Góndar, during which the political and civil state of Abyssinia was investigated. 3. An Excursion to the Kulla or Kolla, "the hottest part of Abyssinia" (Bruce, vol. vii. p. 176). 4. A visit to the celebrated Cataract of the Nile, at Alata. 5. A Residence at Aksúm, on the author's return to Musawwa. Of these divisions, the second and last give a very complete account of the people of Abyssinia and of the political commotions by which that country has been rent for more than half a century. The other divisions are almost exclusively devoted to Natural History, the favourite pursuit of the learned and enterprising author—whose additions to our knowledge in various branches of Natural Science, particularly Zoology, are too well known to require further notice in this place. A sketch of the Abyssinian History, from the commencement of Tekla Haïmanót's reign to the present time; a catalogue of books purchased in that country and presented with the author's wonted liberality to the Public Library of his native city, and the data of astronomical observations made during his stay in Abyssinia, form a sort of appendix to the narrative, and furnish the most authentic materials for the literature and geography of the country visited, which have appeared since Dr. Murray published his valuable and critical edition of Bruce's Travels.

The plates, which are faithful representations of the objects delineated, give the reader a just idea of the Abyssinian costumes, of their public buildings, and of the scenery in their Alps, in regions where perpetual snow is found almost under the Line. The antiquary will derive much instruction from plate 8, containing figures of Abyssinian coins of various ages, which mark their progress from the use of the Greek to that of the present alphabet, and appear to confirm the ingenious theory of Dr. Murray (Bruce's Trav., vol. ii., p. 348): late discoveries, however, in Arabia, of Himyarí inscriptions, bearing a close resemblance to the Ge'ez or Ethiopic, but containing letters not found in it's alphabet, though occurring on stones still extant in Abyssinia (Salt's Trav., p. 414), will make the student pause before he adopts that theory, and derives the Ethiopic letters from the Greek. Accurate copies of some ancient Ethiopic

inscriptions, and great labour judiciously bestowed on the interpretation of them, also give the author a fresh claim to the thanks of the antiquary; and it may be remarked that he seems to have ascertained, for the first time, the true name\* of the King by whose order the celebrated Axumitic inscription was engraved. Dr. Rüppell, whose zeal for the advancement of knowledge never relaxes, gives reason to hope that a chasseur, whom he dispatched from Góndar to Shawwá,† in 1837, will collect such information as will form a supplement to the present work, and he promises to impart this information to the public, should his expectations be realised.

The limits to which this notice is necessarily restricted, will not allow of any considerable extracts from a book which presents so many passages worth extracting: all, therefore, that can here be given is Dr. Rüppell's description of the falls near the Great Cataract of Alata; which Bruce says (vol. v. p. 105) "was the most magnificent sight that he ever beheld;" and where "the water," according to Lobo (*Relation of the River Nile*, p. 16: Lond. 1669), "being shot with so much violence as to fall at a distance, makes an arch, and under that, leaves a large road where people pass in security not to be wet. There are convenient seats cut in the rock for travellers to rest themselves, where they enjoy the most pleasant sight imagination can fancy, made by the sun's reflection on the water, so producing glorious and pleasing colours resembling those of the rainbow, which at this nearness of the water, most deliciously satisfy and please the eye." That cataract Dr. Rüppell unfortunately missed, from not having Bruce's *Travels* at hand.

"Two hours (6 miles) from Denbasa," he says (S. 212), "we crossed the little river Alata, which here, flowing from N.N.E., discharges its waters into the Abáï (Nile),  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an hour (2 miles) west of the bridge. Passing through a tract continually becoming more wild and rocky, we at length, after travelling for  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an hour further, reached the bridge of Deldäi,‡ which is a highly singular and striking object. Through a narrow cleft in the rock, more than 60 feet deep, the perpendicular sides of which are in many places scarcely 2 fathoms asunder, the Nile here flowing to the S.E.,§ rushes down through an uninterrupted series of foaming cascades. . . . The bridge (plate 9) consists of eight

\* Lizanas instead of Aizanas. In Greek, A differs less from Λ than A from L in Ethiopic.

† From Mr. Isenberg we learn that the *w* in this name is doubled; the first vowel is not therefore, as before supposed, mute.

‡ Deldäi, which the traveller took for a proper name, signifies "the bridge."

§ N.E. in the original; but the map shows that there is either some very short bend in the river's course here, or that nordöstlich is put, by mistake, for südöstlich.

arches, of different sizes, of which the northernmost, by much the largest of all, crosses the cleft, and is therefore the only one beneath which the river always passes. The length of the bridge is 90 paces (150 yards), and its breadth 15 feet (5 yards). It is not straight, and is crossed in the middle by a wall, in which there is a gate: at its northern end there is a kind of watch-tower, now in ruins. All the stone-work of the bridge consists of lava, except the arching, which is formed of hewn sandstone."

"The hills lying immediately over the banks of the river are wild, rent masses of volcanic rock, partly overgrown with large trees and rampant shrubs. About 100 feet to the west of the bridge, the upper edges of the rift in the rock, which forms the proper bed of the stream, approach each other to within about 9 feet; and I was assured that the distance was often cleared by a bold leap. How far the foaming cascades extend eastwards I could neither ascertain by my own observation nor learn by any satisfactory report from the natives. To the west a chain of similar waterfalls continues for about a  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an hour (1 mile); between which and the Lake Tzana the river is said to cut its way, in a serpentine course, through rich meadow-ground. At the commencement of the cascades to the east, there is a small island, with the convent of Abú Kēdam, near which the great waterfall described by Bruce (vol. v. p. 105) must be sought, according to him, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  an English mile above the bridge." Bruce has, apparently not without reason, accused Lobo of exaggeration in his account of this cataract; but the Portuguese traveller does not say that he himself sat beneath the curve of the river, as Bruce affirms: and Dr. Rüppell heard the roar of waters very distinctly (mit vieler Deutlichkeit, S. 212) when 7 or 8 miles distant; he, however, says nothing of "the minute atoms and subtle smoke" of the water "seen as far" (Lobo, p. 16). Had Bruce been less flippant in charging others with exaggeration, his own transgressions in that line would not have been so severely visited.

The meteorological observations and heights barometrically ascertained by the author during his residence in Abyssinia from 1831 to 1833, which have been carefully examined by Dr. Mädler of Berlin, form a very valuable addition to our physical knowledge: but that which will most immediately attract the geographer's notice, is the beautiful map of the author's routes, laid down with his well-known care and accuracy. If the correction of flagrant errors in preceding maps be a merit in the eyes of the geographer, the author has a powerful claim to our thanks; for he has shown that the rivers between Adwa and Aksúm run southwards, instead of northwards, as "all preceding

authorities" had maintained; a discrepancy so great as to attract the notice of a learned and acute writer in the 'Athenæum' (No. 669), whose demurrer to this innovation was pertly but satisfactorily answered, in a subsequent number of that journal, by a very competent witness, M. Antoine d'Abbadie. The fourteenth section of the present work (S. 411), containing the details of Dr. Rüppell's astronomical observations, is one of those important contributions to geographical science which render his book peculiarly an object of interest to the readers of this Journal.\*

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\* As a prophet rarely has honour in his own country, some anonymous German reviewer has endeavoured to anatomise the Frankfort traveller, and, among other serious errors, finds fault with his calling a place Gekdud instead of Jack-dull. May not this learned reviewer have fallen in with some English wag, who wished to help him to an appropriate *nom de guerre*?

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